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ABSTRACT

This document presents summaries of the four presentations and two panel discussions from a conference that focused on the need for schools, employment and training systems, business, foundations, and other resources to coordinate efforts to address educational and employment problems of disadvantaged youth. "Public Subsidy or Private Payroll" challenges the private sector to develop cooperative working relationships to provide disadvantaged youth with greater opportunities. "Federal Role and Support: History and Budget Update" describes the impact of federal efforts to address youth unemployment problems and provides an assessment of current administration proposals for future federal support. In "Legislative Proposals" are outlined and compared four major legislative employment and training proposals under consideration in the House and Senate. "Education for Citizenship vs. Training for Employment" considers the purpose and function of education. The conference summary ends with presentations and discussions from two panels, one concerning the implication for public policy of relating school and work and the other concerning business/education partnerships. (YLB)

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Summary of Youthwork/Institute for Educational Leadership Conference

"The Transition From School To Work: The Problem That Won't Take Care of Itself"

March 18, 1982
Washington, D.C.

Cosponsored by: Youthwork, Inc. and
The Institute for Educational Leadership, Inc. (IEL)

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INTRODUCTION

The Youthwork and Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) Conference focused on the necessity for schools, employment and training systems, businesses, foundations and other resources to come together, build new alliances and work together in new ways to address the severe educational and employment problems faced by disadvantaged young people. With climbing school dropout rates among disadvantaged minority youth, unemployment among 16-19 year old youth at over 20 percent, an increasing need for a technically skilled workforce, and a shrinking pool of all sorts of resources to tackle the problems, the need for creative, collaborative solutions is indisputable. While the goal of functional collaboration seems clear, achieving it remains difficult and controversial, and is frequently caught in political crossfire.

The unfortunate tendency of institutions to close ranks and protect their own turf when threatened with cutbacks and economic recession is a major barrier to building partnerships required for the long haul to combat the problems significantly. Conference presenters and participants spoke about the scope of the problem and its impact on the lives of young people and our societal institutions; the history and current uncertainty about institutional roles and resources; and about some directions and practices that have proved successful and point the way for a renewed commitment to solving the human and economic crisis of unemployed and unemployable youth.

PUBLIC SUBSIDY OR PRIVATE PAYROLL

Dr. Myrtis Mosley Powell, Executive Assistant to the President at Miami University of Ohio and member of the Youthwork Board, began the session by challenging leaders and representatives in various fields to take the lead in developing cooperative working relationships that will provide disadvantaged youth a better chance and greater opportunities. Emphasizing that a choice has to be made between public subsidy or private payroll for our youth, she noted that we cannot wait for economic revitalization or for the federal government in Washington to tell the private sector how to solve the problem.

Problems Facing Our Youth

The political and economic rhetoric in our society sets up expectations that are not being realized by large numbers of disadvantaged youth--especially black and other minority young people. For black youth the unemployment rate is a staggering two and a half times that for the whole youth population, reaching 50 per cent or more in depressed, major urban areas. Dr. Powell calls this "a disaster waiting to happen," that will not go away as the population ages because those segments of our population having the most difficulty are in fact increasing as a percentage of the population.

Institutionally, education is tremendously isolated from work in our society, a fact that exacerbates the transition from school to work for disadvantaged young people. This transition process itself is very abrupt and fragmented, forcing many young people to float in the twilight zone between adolescence and adulthood. The transition process also is more uncertain today than in earlier times when the job market was less diverse and turbulent, and when young people typically worked in the same occupations as their parents.

We can say neither that unemployed youth are a homogeneous group nor that there is a single cause of the problem. Casting blame on one source or another is counterproductive. It's everyone's problem, not just a labor market problem, and a series of factors are involved:

- Deficiency in basic skill development
- Lack of work experience, job seeking and keeping skills
- Shortage of job opportunities
- Racial discrimination
- Age discrimination
- Technological revolution in the work place
- Jobs and youth in different geographical places

- Expanding number of youthful workers and disadvantaged minority youth as a percentage of all youth
- Lack of jobs paying well and providing opportunities for mobility
- Restrictions imposed by protective labor laws
- Breakdown in and fragmentation of social institutions, including the family
- Attractiveness of street life, subterranean labor market, etc., etc.

New alliances among schools, employers, labor groups, and community organizations are required to create and support integrated approaches that will allow expectations to be met and stave off the creation of "a permanent underclass and self-perpetuating culture of poverty."

Creating and Fostering New Partnerships

Collaboration is not new; we can point to many examples around the country. We do, however, need to increase the building of "true partnerships," meshing common interests and separate strengths, where there is equality among parties and turf issues are openly and forthrightly dealt with and resolved. Name calling must stop. Businesses must stop blaming education and reach out and help; and education must break down its own barriers and bureaucratic red tape to take advantage of what business has to offer. Excuses for inaction also must stop. Education must quit using the lack of financial resources as its excuse for failing to produce a marketable and functionally literate product. There is a shortage of resources, but doubling school resources does not double learning. Business must not abandon the cause with the charge that educators won't change the way they operate.

Among the necessary partners who have been suggested many times are secondary and postsecondary educational institutions, small and large employers, organized labor, community groups, local governments, and state and local social service agencies. There are many areas of possible collaboration, as many as the partners decide. Collaborators can be po-

tential resources for each other and for the young people. Businesses, for example, could provide fiscal support, job placements, work-study opportunities and other kinds of working internships; advise on curriculum content that focuses on job needs, pointing out the importance of joining theory and practice in vocational education; help train not only students, but counselors and teachers as well; and serve as advisors on management and budgetary issues. Educational systems need to learn more about the world of work, and educators must get out of their classrooms and offices to experience that world firsthand.

In addition to schools and businesses serving as resources for each other, there is an additional, important kind of resource that has been growing and been effective in helping to build partnerships during the past few years. Intermediary organizations can help broker new relationships between old antagonists and relieve both businesses and educators of some of the added burdens of helping to educate and train the disadvantaged. Some examples of these are Youthwork, Inc.; Act Together, Inc.; Jobs for Youth in Boston, New York and Chicago; National Alliance of Business's Chicago Allicance of Business Education Training, Private Industry Councils; Public/Private Ventures in Philadelphia; Opportunity Industrialization Centers; 70001, Ltd.; TAT-Training and Technology in Oakridge, Tennessee; and Work Education Councils.

Citing specific efforts based on her work with The Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, Dr. Powell pointed out that successful and ongoing work education partnerships around the country can be used as models to build new partnerships in new places. Five efforts were highlighted:

- School-to-Work Action Teams Demonstration in Boston, Akron, Albuquerque and Philadelphia emphasizes three areas: student development, teacher development and employer/mentor readiness. There is collaboration among schools, businessess, unions, community organizations and local governmental employment and training agencies. Representatives of business, including Private Industry Councils and Chambers of Commerce are the designated grantees.

- Peninsula Academies located in East Palo Alto, California demonstrate school-within-a-school models.
- Businesses Adopt-a-School in Oakland, California.
- Private Sector Initiated Work Education Program, located in ten sites around the country, are operated through Youthwork, Inc. as intermediary.
- A statewide effort is underway with the Commissioner of Education in Connecticut to establish School-to-Work Teams in five urban regions in the state.

Effective "true partnerships" can be built. Businesses have been found to be willing to take some chances to serve disadvantaged youth, and traditionally inflexible educational systems have shown that they can change or at least bend. Funding, of course, is very important, but Dr. Powell's experience indicates that small amounts can be effective in bringing collaborators together. This is especially true for private funding which has much more flexibility. In contrast, public funding usually is less effective because of accompanying bureaucratic red tape and restrictions on use. There is a great need to reduce the red tape associated with public funding in order to make it a more accessible to partnership building among many diverse groups.

FEDERAL ROLE AND SUPPORT: HISTORY AND BUDGET UPDATE

In recent years there has been a large federal presence in addressing the unemployment problems of disadvantaged youth. Robert Taggart, Director of the Youth Knowledge Development Project and former Administrator of the Office of Youth Programs, U.S. Department of Labor, described the impact of those efforts and provided an assessment of current administration proposals for future federal support.

In 1977, the Youth Employment Demonstration Projects Act provided an additional $1 billion in federal support to identify and test ways of improving employment prospects for disadvantaged young people. This massive infusion of federal funds resulted in the creation of 150,000 new youth slots; a 40% increase in the Summer Youth Employment Program

with the addition of 250,000 SYEP positions; a doubling of Job Corps with an additional 20,000 slots; and an increase of 375,000 Public Services Employment (PSE) positions. All this occurred within nine months, testing the absorptive capacity and strength of public delivery systems around the country.

The effects are clear and important. Of particular note:

- Employment rates increased during that time and more than one-third of the increase is directly attributable to CETA.
- There was an increase of 450,000 jobs for youth as a result of the federal effort.
- Over 20 percent of all poor minority youths were employed by CETA.
- All employment growth for minority youth was due to these employment and training programs.

Impact of The Administration's Budget

When the Carter administration placed youth employment among its top priorities, it cut back on the program existing then in anticipation of new youth programs. The Reagan administration did not take up the youth employment initiative, and there has been a resultant loss of 100,000 jobs for youth, 50,000 for non-white young people. Even before the Reagan budget takes full effect, CETA cutbacks account for two-thirds of the loss of jobs for youth. Present administration cuts will mean an additional loss of 100,000 jobs for teenagers, 45,000 of these for minority youth, plus the loss of 75,000 training slots. All the legislative proposals before Congress in March except the Hawkins bill cutback further from 1982 levels.

The administration has proposed 1983 support for employment and training activities at roughly 50 percent of funding levels for these activities in 1982. The administration's cuts in employment and training coupled with reductions in education mean even fewer resources for disadvantaged teenagers. Administration budget proposals cut vocational education and compensatory education by one-third from 1982 levels, and by one-half

from 1981. Handicapped and bilingual education funding would drop by one-fifth, leaving youth 33 percent below 1981 levels. Support for higher education and student aid would decrease 45 percent from 1982 to 1983, representing a three-fifths decline from 1981. In addition, because cutbacks are not adjusted for inflation, actual support will continue to erode.

False Perception About Youth Employment Training Programs

The administration has argued against employment and training programs, saying that they are inefficient, that the private sector will provide the resources and can operate the programs better and that the cuts will eliminate much waste and result in greater efficiency and value for each federal dollar spent. The facts undermine these arguments.

First, research on the programs shows cost-effectiveness. Out-of-school, in-school and Public Service Employment (PSE) programs have put unemployed teenagers to work and reduced crime. These programs have also increased post-program employment rates and earnings. Entitlement efforts improved school retention rates, as well as post-program work and education patterns. Classroom training increased post-program earnings by 10 percent in the first year after participation and 13 percent in the second year. Job Corps raised earnings by 8 percent in the first year and 13 percent in the second. On-the-job training has raised earnings by 18 percent. School-to-work transition programs reduce the likelihood of young people dropping out of school or being out of work after graduating. Jobs for America's Graduates Program (JAG), for example, has resulted in increased earnings of nearly $1000 per year for the high school seniors participating. The benefit/cost ratio of many of these programs has been estimated to range from 1.4 to 5.5.

Second, private sector resources to tackle the enormous educational and employment problems of disadvantaged youth are subject to question. There have been no large-scale, sustained, successful efforts by the private sector. Even with expanding employment from 1977 to 1979, with subsidies and tax credits, minority teenagers were not being hired. Vo-

lunteerism does not present any solution either, since the cost to recruit and maintain volunteers is more than the cost of transitional school-to-work programs. In addition, because employability development has been low on the list of school priorities, school systems cannot and will not fill the gap at a time when their resources are also shrinking.

Finally, less rather than greater efficiency and cost effectiveness is predicted with fewer resources. While there is always "fat" with rapid expansion, like that which occurred when the youth programs were inaugurated, the unit cost decreased as those programs stabilized. Fewer resources will mean fewer, shorter term services and less quality control, resulting in short-lived benefits and less overall efficiency. In addition, reduced funding and limited services will promote more "creaming" and emphasis on serving older out-of-school individuals, leaving the most disadvantaged teenagers unserved. Technical assistance can improve program efficiency, but the cost of T.A. is also high.

Consolidation of Systems is Necessary

With the prospects of greatly reduced funding, systems must work together and consolidate. According to Taggart, customized operations will be unaffordable; standardization should be promoted, and services will have to be delivered using low cost staff. This is not happening yet as everyone is still competing for a piece of the remaining federal pie.

LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS

The Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA), which includes the authorization for youth employment and training programs under Title IV, expires at the end of this fiscal year. Over the past several months, Congress has been discussing new employment and training proposals. Gregory Wurzburg, Director of Operations, Research and Policy for Youthwork, Inc., outlined and compared four major legislative proposals under consideration in the House and Senate.

Since the time of The Youthwork/IEL conference, the relevant subcommittees and committees in the House and Senate have been considering the various proposals. As of mid-May, all subcommittee and committee work has been completed to clear the way for a bill to be considered by the full House of Representatives. Subcommitte work has been completed in the Senate, but objections by the Reagan administration to the bill approved by subcommittee is delaying action by the full Senate Human Resources Committee. If the Senate Committee does not approve a bill by the end of May, new legislation will be seriously jeopardized. If and when the Senate Human Resources Committee does approve a bill, the full House and Senate will consider their respective bills. If each chamber passes a bill, differences will need to be resolved in conference and a final action will hopefully be completed by late summer.

Varied Emphasis on Youth

The bills in both the House and Senate require that at least half of all resources allocated to the local level go to young people, though there are allowances for some flexibility around that 50 percent figure. The bills do differ, however, in how they define youth. The House defines "young people" to include youths up through age 21, while the Senate bill stretches the age range to include 24 year olds.

Role of The Private Sector

Both bills dramatically expand the role of private employers in determining state and local employment and training policies by requiring that a majority of representatives on private industry councils be from the private sector, and by giving those councils authority over all employment and training policies. The two bills also increase the emphasis on placing adult trainees in private jobs and better preparation of young people for private jobs.

Role of Schools and Community Groups

There are no set-asides in either bill reserving funds for schools or community organizations.

Designating Service Delivery Areas

The House and Senate bills, as they stand now, differ considerably with respect to how service delivery areas are designated. The House version increases the minimum population for a service delivery area from 100,000 to 150,000, leaving final approval with the U.S. Secretary of Labor. The Senate version essentially increases the minimum population to 250,000 (with some flexibility downward if there is business support) and grants governors a great deal of authority in designating service delivery areas.

EDUCATION FOR CITIZENSHIP VS. TRAINING FOR EMPLOYMENT

Mr. James Joseph, President of the Council on Foundations and member of the IEL Board, presented the luncheon address. He prefaced his main remarks with comments on the role of foundations and philanthropic giving.

Role and Limitations of the Private Sector

Mr. Joseph noted that foundation giving cannot be a substitute for support from the federal and state governments. Last year, corporate and foundation giving was about $5 billion, only a small fraction of current and proposed federal domestic budget cuts. Even though tax changes contained in the Economic Recovery Act increased the allowable level of contributions, the amount of taxable profits on which contributions are based is decreasing and will result in less absolute corporate giving. Philanthropic resources of all types have the responsibility to emphasize the real limitations of philanthropy: It can supplement but not supplant public support.

The roles businesses and foundations can play are nonetheless very important. Businesses can promote and facilitate economic development in communities. Foundations and businesses can work together to address the problems resulting from plant closings and relocations. Among other things, they can encourage and develop entrepreneurships. Specifically, they can loan expertise, and use their influence to gain access to markets by stimulating demand for products. They can also develop standards so that no one group of employers bears a dispproportionate share of lay-offs. In addition, they have an important role to play in cooperation with education to insure a closer match between further employment opportunities and the kinds of academic preparation needed to take advantage of them.

Purpose and Function of Edcuation

Enormous and rapid changes are taking place in our institutions, the marketplace and the world that have profound implications for American education. It is not simply training for employment that should be the focus of debate; educational leaders need to concern themselves with new forms of excellence, new standards of equity as well as new opportunities for employment.

To achieve excellence in education, we must move beyond excessive preoccupation with vocational utility, excessive specialization and narrow careerism. In these times especially, there is the need for educational administration which can find creative ways to do more with less, and educational curricula which combine liberal arts education with specific competencies. Mr. Joseph pointed out that the nation's governors, in a policy statement, have made a good contribution by describing the two major and broad functions of education as: (1) preparing a literate society that enhances the well-being of the nation and (2) assisting individuals in preparing for the world of work.

The challenge to achieve equity means transforming a political system based on equality of participation in its policies into an economic system based on equality in the distribution of its benefits. Graduates

need to understand how the political and economic system works and who benefits. We also need to shift our focus from social service remedies to the creation of more fundamental opportunities for economic development.

While training for employment cannot be the main emphasis of education, academic institutions must play a key role in employment training for those they educate. Educators must construct curricula to keep pace with the rapidly changing society and should analyze demographic and economic trends in developing educational strategies. They must also begin to collaborate more closely with leaders in the corporate sector in relating instruction to technological developments already underway. Employers in that relationship must be prepared to provide the specific training for career development. Training itself should focus on providing the tools young people need to enter mainstream occupations, not marginal jobs. There remains the need to dispel the myth that minority youth should only be trained for social service programs in the non-profit sector.

There are also very important societal responsibilities to ensure excellence, equity and appropriate preparation for the future. Issues of access and quality are the responsibility of the federal government. Greater efficiency must concern everyone, and it is not antithetical to the concern with equity. Finally, increased attention must be paid to developing new financing mechanisms. Establishment of local education foundations is suggested as one vehicle.

RELATING SCHOOL AND WORK: POLICY ISSUES AND SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES

The final portion of the conference featured two panels, one discussing the implications for public policy of relating school and work and the other discussing business/education partnerships.

Policy Issues

Joan Wills, Director of the Office of Research and Development, Center for Policy Research of the National Governors' Association and member of the Youthwork Board, was the principal speaker for the first panel. The panelists were: Nathaniel Semple, Vice-President and Director of Governmental Affairs for the Committee for Economic Development and member of the Youthwork Board; Dena Stoner, Director of Appropriations and Intergovermental Finance for the National School Boards Association; and Arnold Torres, Executive Director of the League of United Latin American Citizens. Nancy Franco, Western Regional Director of The Planning and Management Assistance Project, Center for Community Change and member of the Youthwork Board, moderated the discussion.

Ms. Wills noted, like other conference participants, that training most appropriately takes place on the job, not in education settings per se. Governments serve best the main function of being a broker, not a provider of job specific vocational training. Commenting that everyone, especially employers, is dissatisfied with old mechanisms and that CETA was not an efficient voucher system to buy training, she highlighted several issues that have to be addressed.

The federal role has to be decided based upon the policy issue of whether we fund institutions or individuals--decisions which are very difficult in the current budget cutting period. Currently, in education we have a mixed model: Secondary education resources fund programs; post-secondary resources support individuals. The country lacks experience in coming to terms with these issues. In contrast to other societies which have made training part of the fabric of their systems using payroll tax financing, this country has financed income maintenance for the past 25 years.

On the education side, the emphasis will continue to be on the development of good basic skills. Some 30 plus states now have minimum competency tests, but few include knowledge of computers or other technological areas which are among the fastest growing sectors of the economy.

There is also growing debate about teacher certification and textbooks. But so far, there is little debate on how to assess outcomes of changes and interventions.

Outcome measurement remains the most controversial issue between education and employment and training systems. For instance, the employability competency measures -- using "career passports" -- proposed in the 1979 Carter youth bill caused great debate because they would have crossed political boundaries like a diploma, violating local educational governance structures. We can look to the military and Job Corps for some examples of outcome measurements, but the challenge still remains for education, businesses and other systems to develop new outcome assessment strategies and to agree upon them.

Nathaniel Semple recommended development of federal policy that would stimulate and drive work/education partnerships. Presently, public/private partnerships are being pursued by many without coordination. A coherent policy would make explicit the need to address partnerships, and those partnerships with schools are especially important in developing competency standards and measurements.

Dena Stoner questioned the role of schools in training which is only one function of education, and similarly questioned the role of labor systems in schools. Because the systems are so different and secondary educational programming is so diverse for youth in the 13-18 age range, a better division of labor is required. She suggested that perhaps employment and training systems should work with young people 18 years old and over and education should work with those under 18. Most education and work partnerships have not been 50/50 arrangments, and equal partnerships are necessary to secure willingness to cooperate, good representation and real commitments. With regard to assessment, competency based standards will be useful, but have limitations. There is some concern that competency standards will, in fact, narrow teaching.

Arnold Torres commented that federal training policy and intervention is most needed for youth who are out of school and over age 18. Noting

that schools have the fiscal resources and need to do a better job, he argued that training efforts cannot be all things to all people--something which CETA Youth Programs tried to be. Partnerships have a long way to go to maturity and, under CETA, schools were not ready.

Business/Education Practices

Ruby G. Martin,, President of Martin and Rosi, Inc. and a consultant for Youthwork, made the primary presentation for the second discussion session which highlighted successful and innovative ways to create real and successful partnerships between education and work, with a specific focus on ten Youthwork projects funded in part by a grant from The Edna McConnell Clark Foundation. Erik Butler, Executive Director of the Center for Public Service, and Floretta D. McKenzie, Superintendent of the District of Columbia Public Schools and member of the IEL Board, constituted the panel. Badi Foster, Director of the Aetna Institute for Corporate Education, Aetna Life and Casuality and member of the Youthwork Board, served as moderator.

Mrs. Martin described the "10 Cities Clark Project," which consists of a group of private sector initiated work/education programs in 10 communities around the country. Through real partnerships between the private sector and schools, the projects initiated and fostered fundamental changes in education and work institutions to increase employment prospects for youth and upward career mobility in primary labor markets. The projects work with a population of young people characterized by Mrs. Martin as "truly trying minority disadvantaged youth." These are youth who are frequently overlooked in targeting on high risk populations, but who also may not make it without help.

Building partnerships can be done, but it is still a struggle. It should be recognized that :

- Not all relationships are partnerships; some are for expediency.
- Not all businessess or all employment and training programs are alike and they must be dealt with individually.

- Businesses are not interested in young people, or any workers for that matter, who are not "truly trying."
- Opportunity for mobility within businesses is more critical than the size of the business in helping young people build career paths. Young people should not be expected to make quantum leaps in employment after short-term work experience.

These Clark projects were initiated and are administered and owned by the private sector (Local Private Industry Councils, Alliances of Business and Chambers of Commerce). Private sector partners define the needs and work with schools to establish programs which develop the employability of youth. Business representatives say that they became committed to projects for several reasons: They have lost confidence in schools to prepare young people for the work force, but recognize schools as important established institutions and vehicles for educating youth in many areas. Businesses prefer prevention to remediation. They also are interested in good ideas and assistance in carrying them out rather than a grand national design. There is a reluctance to working with disruptive youth even with public subsidies. The price for participation of businesses is that they must be included in the project in reasonable and meaningful ways and that their advice and counsel is responded to and taken seriously. Businesses are not thrilled by partnerships, but they are receptive.

Dirk Butler concurred that we must continue to build locally based infrastructures and partnerships that can ease the problems of school to work transition. In this area, the problems for youth are huge, while the interventions, however successful, are small. Since there apparently will be minimal federal commitment and support, local partnership building is critical. Employers complain that the "products" of schools, the youth, are inadequately prepared for jobs. Much more attention should be paid to changing the inadequate processes of preparation than to debating about inadequate products, and effective partnerships can serve that end.

Commenting that practitioners have to focus on practice not theory, Floretta McKenzie illustrated several strategies that the District of Columbia Public School System is using to foster mutually beneficial partnership arrangements. By way of background, there are approximately 95,000 students in D.C. public schools, 95% of whom are minority and 60% who do not go on to higher education. A majority of students thus require preparation for work. The school system has attracted local companies by first getting national corporations involved. The system offers the private sector a range of choices for involvement from fiscal support to teacher training. The school system also has hired a director for corporate relations and has developed a relationship with the local Board of Trade. In addition, career high schools are receiving increased attention. Overall, the private sector is viewed as an important part of the educational process in Washington D.C.; by choice, because it is appropriate, and, by necessity, because of increasingly limited resources.